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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS TRANSITIONAL ADMINISTRATION FOR EASTERN SLAVONIA, BARANJA AND WESTERN SIRMIUM

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Security Council, by its resolution 1037 (1996) of 15 January 1996, decided to establish the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) as a peace-keeping operation for an initial period of 12 months. It further requested the Secretary-General to appoint, in consultation with the parties to the Basic Agreement of 12 November 1995 (A/50/757-S/1995/951) and with the Security Council, a Transitional Administrator, who would have overall authority over the civilian and military components of the operation.

2. The Security Council approved the nomination of Mr. Jacques Paul Klein (United States of America) as the Transitional Administrator, and he took up his duties on 11 February 1996. Initially, pending the identification of a suitable site for UNTAES headquarters in the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (hereinafter referred to as "the Region"), the Transitional Administrator and his staff operated from existing United Nations facilities at Zagreb. In late February, a site was identified on the grounds of the Serb barracks at Vukovar, and construction of a headquarters began in early March. The Force Commander of UNTAES, Major-General Jozef Schoups (Belgium), established his interim headquarters at Erdut and assumed command of the military component of UNTAES on 14 March. The military component transferred from Erdut to Vukovar on 1 April and the Transitional Administrator and his staff moved from Zagreb to Vukovar on 22 April.

3. This first report to the Security Council on the activities of UNTAES and the implementation of the Basic Agreement by the parties is submitted pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 1037 (1996), in which the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to report monthly to the Council, the first such report to be submitted within one week after the date on which the demilitarization was scheduled to be completed. The demilitarization of the Region began on 21 May and was completed on 20 June.

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II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

4. As I noted in my report of 23 November 1995 (S/1995/987), the Basic Agreement, signed on 12 November 1995, is a landmark accomplishment providing for the peaceful integration into Croatia of the Region, and opening the way for the return to their homes of all Croatian displaced persons who so wish. In keeping with this, the mission's objectives are to bring the Region, demilitarized and secure, under the sovereign control of the Government of Croatia; to retain the multiethnic character of the Region; to promote an atmosphere of confidence among all local residents irrespective of their origin; to enable all refugees and displaced persons to enjoy the right to return freely to their homes and live there in conditions of security; to promote respect for the highest standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms; to promote redevelopment and reconstruction of the Region in harmony with the overall plans of Croatia; and to organize free and fair local elections not later than 30 days before the end of the transitional period.

5. Upon taking up his responsibilities, the Transitional Administrator initiated, and has thereafter maintained, a close dialogue with senior officials of the Government of Croatia. He has met with President Franjo Tudjman and the Croatian cabinet on several occasions to discuss the implementation of resolution 1037 (1995) and the Basic Agreement. The Government of Croatia has also established an office at Osijek for cooperation with UNTAES, which provides the necessary coordination for the day-to-day requirements of the implementation process. President Tudjman and other senior Croatian interlocutors have expressed their general satisfaction with the progress achieved so far by UNTAES.

6. In paragraph 25 of my report to the Council of 13 December 1995 (S/1995/1028) on the implementation of the Basic Agreement, I had mentioned the value of an amnesty from prosecution for certain categories of offences, excluding war crimes. This would assist in the process of demilitarization, calm the fears of persons wishing to return to their homes inside the Region and other parts of Croatia, and facilitate the overall process of reintegration of the local population into the mainstream of Croatian society. The Transitional Administrator wrote to President Tudjman on 2 May 1996 requesting that the Government of Croatia take steps to adopt such a law, in advance of the beginning of demilitarization. Subsequently, the Security Council, through a statement by its President of 22 May (S/PRST/1996/26), called upon the Government of Croatia to grant amnesty to all persons who, either voluntarily or by coercion, served in the civil administration, military or police forces or the local Serb authorities in the former United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) with the exception of those who committed war crimes as defined in international law.

7. Unfortunately, the law, as finally adopted, enacted on 31 May, lacks the specificity that is required in a penal enactment and is more restrictive than similar laws previously adopted in Croatia. The main drawbacks appear to be that the new law does not provide amnesty to all Croatian citizens but only those in the Region; further, it includes the possibility of prosecuting, in Croatian courts, persons accused of "most serious crimes" - a categorization that leads to confusion and uncertainty as to whom it might be applied. Both

the local Serb population in the Region and international humanitarian agencies have expressed concern about the restrictive nature of this amnesty law. In response to urgings by UNTAES, the Government of Croatia provided clarifications to the law at a press conference addressed by senior cabinet ministers on 17 June. According to the explanations provided a total of 50 persons in the Region stand accused of war crimes and would have to be tried in keeping with international practice. Another 4,774 persons had cases pending against them, being accused of crimes that came under the exemptions not covered by the amnesty law. UNTAES continues to seek further clarifications in this regard, including details of the persons thus accused.

8. The Transitional Administrator and other members of UNTAES have maintained regular contact with representatives of the local Serb population. In the month of April the chief Serb negotiator, Mr. Milan Milanovic, was replaced by Mr. Goran Hadzic. At the same time the local Executive Council, which had been instrumental in coordinating the implementation of the Basic Agreement, had its chairman and many members replaced. An unhelpful element was introduced in May, when a proposal for autonomy or special status for the Region was put forward by various Serb municipal councils. This was later modified by the local Regional Assembly to a request for special rights or "special status" for the Serbs living in the Region, in the fields of local self-government, culture and representation in law enforcement agencies among others.

9. In view of the significant role played by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the conclusion of the Basic Agreement, and its continuing interest in the successful implementation of the UNTAES mandate, the Transitional Administrator has, on a number of occasions, briefed President Slobodan Milosevic and other Yugoslav authorities on relevant developments.

10. The visit of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to Zagreb on 11 March resulted in agreements between Croatia covering the Adriatic oil pipeline, consular matters, the restoration of highway and railway links and the re-establishment of air corridor and telecommunication links between the two countries. At the request of both countries UNTAES has been assisting in the implementation of these agreements, particularly where communication and other links traverse the Region. UNTAES, with the support of its engineering elements, organized the demining and clearing of 7 kilometres of the Zagreb-Belgrade highway that passes through the Region. It also facilitated the establishment of Croatian immigration and customs facilities at the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The highway was opened to traffic on 7 May. On the same day, the Adriatic pipeline, where it traverses the Region, was re-opened, enabling oil to be pumped from Croatia to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. UNTAES has also supervised the demining of the main railway line between the two countries, where it runs through the Region between Vinkovci and Tovarnik.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

11. The deployment of the military component of UNTAES was completed on 5 May 1996; the total military strength is at present close to 5,000 combat troops and support units. Belgium has provided headquarters and communications

personnel. Two mechanized infantry battalions, from Belgium and the Russian Federation, were transferred to UNTAES from the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO); two further mechanized infantry battalions, from Pakistan and Jordan, arrived subsequently. Each battalion has been organized into a monitoring force and a company-sized protection force. There is in addition a Ukrainian tank company and an Argentinian reconnaissance company. Ukraine has also provided a transportation helicopter squadron of 6 aircraft and an anti-tank helicopter squadron of 10 helicopters. Medical support is provided by a Czech field hospital and an Indonesian medical company. An engineering battalion from Slovakia will continue to provide support after the departure of the Indonesian engineering battalion, which had been retained from UNCRO.

12. As authorized by resolution 1037 (1996), arrangements have been made with the Implementation Force (IFOR) based in Bosnia and Herzegovina to provide UNTAES with close air support, should it be required. Other arrangements for IFOR support, if needed in an emergency, are in place.

Demilitarization

13. The schedule and procedures for demilitarization were handed over by the Force Commander to the commander of the Serb forces in the Region on 15 April. A copy was also provided to the Government of Croatia. The Force Commander further kept both parties informed of military activities through a joint implementation committee on military affairs.

14. Demilitarization of the Region began at 12 noon local time on 21 May, proceeded smoothly, and was completed on 20 June. All heavy weapons belonging to the local Serb forces have either been removed from the Region or handed over to UNTAES for disposal. From March 1996 to the present, UNTAES has monitored the removal of 93 tanks, 11 armoured personnel carriers, 35 anti-tank systems, 107 artillery pieces, 123 mortars and 42 anti-aircraft guns.

15. UNTAES also established, operated and guarded various weapon collection and destruction sites, where collected weapons and related material were deactivated or destroyed. There has, however, been little handing over of small arms or munitions. While many of these may have been removed from the Region, it is likely that considerable quantities have stayed in private hands, as a result of the anxiety felt by some residents of the Region about their long-term security. UNTAES has developed a procedure for registering non-military weapons of persons entitled to hold them. These will not include weapons above a certain calibre or automatics, which continue to be proscribed under the rules of demilitarization.

16. The UNTAES military component established observation posts in the zone of separation between the Croatian and Serb forces, prior to and during the process of demilitarization, and monitored demining efforts by the parties. It is essential that the integrity of the zone be respected, pending new arrangements after demilitarization. The discovery in early June that elements of the Croatian Special Police and the Croatian army were operating in the zone, near the Lipovac highway, therefore created concern. UNTAES brought its concerns to the attention of the Government of Croatia, noting that such activities were

inimical to the creation of an atmosphere of security in the Region. Following these interventions, incursions into the zone ceased.

17. Among other tasks related to the implementation of the Basic Agreement, UNTAES soldiers have provided support in preventing the illegal removal of resources from the Region. This has included the interdiction of the transport of illegally cut timber by train. On 14 May 1996, UNTAES military units also assumed control of the strategic Djeletovci oilfield, and secured the departure of the "Scorpion" paramilitary unit from the area.

18. United Nations military observers are playing a crucial role in UNTAES by gathering accurate and timely information on all aspects of military and civilian affairs. Through their liaison activities, contacts have been made with all levels of the local military and civilian authorities, including paramilitary forces. This was of critical importance in the period preceding demilitarization. The United Nations military observers reporting and investigative functions have been accepted by all parties and arrangements have been worked out with the Croatian army for them to patrol on both sides of the zone of separation.

IV. CIVILIAN ASPECTS

19. The civilian component of UNTAES is entrusted with an extensive range of responsibilities, which include the setting up of a temporary police force, undertaking tasks related to civil administration and the functioning of public services, facilitating the return of refugees, organizing elections and assisting in the development and economic reconstruction of the Region. The completion of demilitarization will make it possible to give greater attention to these civilian tasks.

20. As described in my report of 13 December 1995 (S/1995/1028), the functional implementation committees were to be the principal engines for the process of reintegration. UNTAES has successfully established joint implementation committees in the areas described in that report. They are chaired by representatives of the Transitional Administrator and are attended by Croatian and local Serb representatives. They identify the areas where action is required to facilitate reintegration and seek solutions acceptable to all sides.

Civil affairs

21. The civil affairs component consists of 44 civil affairs officers, 17 of whom operate from headquarters in Vukovar and 27 in the six field offices at Beli Manastir, Osijek, Vukovar (city), Vinkovci, Erdut and Ilok. It is responsible for the staffing, chairing and coordinating of a number of important joint implementation committees. There are 15 operational joint implementation committees and subcommittees in the areas of public services, education and culture, civil administration and human rights. The joint implementation committee secretariat in civil affairs supports the joint implementation committee on refugees and displaced persons and civil affairs officers participate in the joint implementation committee on police.

22. The joint implementation committee on the restoration of public services, through its sectoral subcommittees, has made significant progress in reconnecting pre-war public services. These include the reopening of postal exchanges with the rest of Croatia, the re-establishment of telecommunications links, the repair and demining of the Vinkovci-Sid railway line, the re-establishment of the electrical transmission grid and the construction of a canal connecting the Sava and Danube rivers. A subcommittee on agriculture has re-established trade links between the Region and other parts of Croatia, including the barter of fertilizer for food grains and pesticides for wine. The subcommittee also arranged for the first anti-mosquito spraying in five years.

23. The joint implementation committee on education and culture is arranging for a joint assessment of school conditions and facilities in the Region, and is also providing a forum for the discussion of such issues as language rights and restoration/preservation of churches, grave sites and monuments. The joint implementation committee on civil administration has agreed on a programme of work on property and personal records, which will be crucial for the transition of local administrative structures into the Croatian system. The joint implementation committee on human rights has provided a mechanism for discussing and transmitting to the Government of Croatia the Serb viewpoint on the amnesty law already referred to. It is also considering human rights training for local non-governmental organizations, for which UNTAES has obtained funding from the Council of Europe. The joint implementation committee on health, co-chaired by a representative of the World Health Organization (WHO), has held a seminar for health professionals from both sides on psycho-social protection of war-traumatized children.

24. The civil affairs component has also worked on confidence-building measures such as family reunions, town hall meetings and the reinstatement of pensions. Family reunion meetings have brought together over 4,000 persons since November 1995, when they were first initiated by UNCRO. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has now largely assumed this task. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) helps individuals from the Region who require assistance to make humanitarian visits to other parts of Croatia. Town hall meetings have enabled UNTAES to explain its mandate and the process envisaged for the reintegration of the Region into Croatia.

25. After lengthy negotiations, the Government of Croatia has agreed to pay pensions to eligible residents of the Region, including, at the insistence of UNTAES, Serb displaced persons from other parts of Croatia. Despite initial doubts and resistance on the part of the local Serb leadership, UNTAES succeeded in starting the necessary registration of beneficiaries by the Croatian Pension Fund.

26. The civil affairs component has facilitated meetings at the local level of the Croatian and Serb commissions for prisoners of war and missing persons. When requested, UNTAES has also facilitated the presence at such meetings of representatives from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. However, the larger question of missing persons remains a matter for resolution by the Governments of the countries concerned, with the assistance of ICRC and other such institutions.

Economic and social aspects

27. Prior to the hostilities, the Region was among the most affluent in the former Yugoslavia with an industrial capacity of approximately US$ 250 million. This is estimated to have declined by 90 per cent since 1991. The Region's rich agricultural sector, once a major exporter, now has difficulty in feeding the local population because of lack of finance for equipment, pesticides and fertilizers. Unemployment is about 40 to 50 per cent and is expected to rise with the demobilization of the local soldiers and police.

28. The single most important economic resource of the Region is the oilfield around Djeletovci. With a total of 74 wells, the oilfield was producing around 10,000 tonnes of crude oil a month, most of which was being refined at the Pancevo refinery in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. For Croatia, it was extremely important to stop this outflow of crude oil and it made this a condition for the opening of the Adriatic pipeline to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Production of crude oil at Djeletovci stopped on 16 April. On 7 June, after UNTAES had established control over the oilfield, a joint technical survey was carried out by Croatian and local Serb experts. Discussions are at present under way to restart production of crude oil and its shipment to the Sisak refinery.

29. The revenue available to the local administration fell rapidly following the closure of the Djeletov oilfield and the consequent effects on industries that were significantly dependent on oil derivatives. Failure to pay salaries in the near future may result in the rapid depletion of public services and in a general breakdown of law and order. If the newly established Transitional Police Force is to be fully responsive to UNTAES command (see para. 33 below), it must be allocated a budget that guarantees adequate remuneration for its personnel and a professional working environment. Funding is also required to incorporate demobilized persons into civilian life through, for example, programmes for demining, removal of war debris, road repair and restoration of public utilities. In view of the potentially destabilizing effects of the situation described above, UNTAES has launched an urgent search to identify funding for the local administration and public services from Croatian and other sources.

30. Economic development is a key factor in stabilizing the Region. An economic reconstruction and coordination unit has been established within the UNTAES civil affairs component. It works closely with political, community and business leaders to obtain data and assess priorities, so that international resources can be mobilized for reconstruction and rehabilitation. It also cooperates with non-governmental organizations and other bilateral and multilateral agencies to coordinate economic assistance offered to the Region. The Governments of Belgium, Norway and the United States have pledged amounts of $5 million, $6.2 million and $9.7 million, respectively, and the European Union has pledged $10 million for the reconstruction of public utilities and the demolition of unsafe buildings, as well as $1.6 million for demining by demobilized persons from the Region.

Police matters

31. UNTAES has an authorized strength of 600 United Nations civilian police monitors, of whom 432 had arrived in the mission area as of 22 June 1996. Early in the mission, the United Nations civilian police established contacts with the local Serb police in the Region and also with the Croatian police. Pending the establishment of a temporary police force, as called for in Security Council resolution 1037 (1996), the United Nations civilian police moved rapidly to establish its presence in all the local police stations and to monitor their functioning. It also monitored the treatment of arrested offenders and the prison system.

32. Simultaneously, UNTAES started work on establishing and training the Transitional Police Force and defining its structure and size, for which purpose it established a joint implementation committee on police matters. The Committee has agreed on the size and structure of the Force, which is to be established on 1 July 1996 and will have an estimated strength of 1,300 personnel. By the beginning of July, 290 members of the Force, 145 of them proposed by the Government of Croatia and 145 by the local Serb representatives, will have undergone professional training at the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) at Budapest. United Nations civilian police monitors have participated in this training programme, which has been assisted by the International Crime Investigation and Training Assistance Project, an agency of the Government of the United States. A further 600 members of the local police have also undergone training by the Project at Erdut in the Region.

33. Demilitarization of the local police, with the exception of those who will remain as members of the Transitional Police Force, has been carried out as part of the overall demilitarization of the Region. The Transitional Police Force will now have the primary responsibility for the maintenance of law and order, operating under the authority of the Transitional Administrator and monitored by the United Nations civilian police.

Border monitors

34. UNTAES is required to establish procedures for the monitoring of existing border crossings and to facilitate the free movement of persons. As of 22 June, 28 UNTAES border monitors had been deployed. Operational monitoring of the Region's nine identified international crossing points by road and rail commenced on 27 May, and 24-hour monitoring will begin as soon as more staff and equipment become available. With the deployment of monitors on the international borders between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, customs regulation has improved and the illegal transportation of timber and looted goods is declining.

Legal matters

35. In order to assist the phased reintegration of the Region's legal system into that of Croatia, UNTAES has initiated liaison with the Region's judiciary in order to monitor all courts, law enforcement bodies and penal establishments. This activity is still perceived with some apprehension among local officials, but will expand gradually. The legal officers of UNTAES remain engaged in the

effort to encourage the Government of Croatia to produce an amnesty law that is short, comprehensive and clear.

Public affairs

36. Before the deployment of UNTAES, the population of the Region had been kept in ignorance or had been misinformed about the Basic Agreement and the relevant Security Council resolutions, and had been subjected to propaganda from both sides. As a result they were ill-informed and apprehensive about their future. UNTAES accordingly concentrated in its public affairs activities on confidence-building. UNTAES is currently producing, three times a month, 50,000 copies in the Croatian and Serbian languages of a two-page UNTAES Bulletin, which has already established a large readership. The early issues were devoted to explaining the Basic Agreement, the Security Council resolutions and the UNTAES mandate. A special issue of 100,000 copies was devoted to the demilitarization process and this will be the pattern for future major initiatives. Several thousand posters were also distributed.

37. UNTAES broadcasts daily on the local radio station at Vukovar, which is heard throughout the Region, and makes radio "call-in" presentations on several other stations. The Transitional Administrator and other senior UNTAES officials also give regular interviews on television, as well as press conferences in Vukovar and other places. UNTAES has organized seminars and workshops for journalists from the Region, other parts of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to discuss the role of the press and press freedom, as these relate to the UNTAES mission.

V. HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS

Displaced persons and refugees

38. In accordance with its mandate, UNHCR is responsible for refugees and displaced persons throughout the former Yugoslavia. It continues to provide food assistance to approximately 42,000 displaced persons in the Region. The distribution, now in its fourth year, is carried out through local Red Cross associations.

39. In the joint implementation committee on the return of refugees and displaced persons, UNHCR has stressed the equal right of return for all Croatian citizens, including displaced Croats and Serbs seeking to return to or from the Region. In the view of UNHCR, this is vital to prevent the further displacement of displaced Serbs at present residing in the Region as and when former residents of the Region return to their homes. The Committee has focused on pilot projects for UNHCR-supported group returns planned for August-November to three villages in the Region and one in Western Slavonia. Demining, construction and/or rehabilitation of dwellings and common facilities will commence in July with returns before winter.

40. The joint implementation committee has also agreed that UNTAES assist the Government of Croatia in facilitating pilot projects on returns to other villages, currently seven villages in the Region, and an as yet undetermined

number of villages in Western Slavonia in consultation with UNHCR. Most of the funding for demining and reconstruction for this programme, which focuses upon largely destroyed villages, will be provided by the Government of Croatia. UNTAES and UNHCR have agreed that the joint implementation committee will be the forum for resolution should there be any inequities between the two programmes.

Demining

41. The demining challenge is daunting - there may be as many as 350,000 mines in the Region. Working in conjunction with UNHCR, UNTAES will facilitate actively humanitarian mine clearing in priority areas. UNTAES also plans to assist in the establishment of a sustainable indigenous mine clearance capacity. The first step will be to retrain and re-equip demilitarized Serb soldiers to form mine clearance teams through an appropriate agency. Eventually it is expected that these local clearance teams will work in conjunction with a Croatian demining organization.

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

42. UNTAES is providing support to activities of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in the Region. The mass grave site at Ovcara remains undisturbed and under 24-hour protection by the UNTAES military component. Plans are being developed for the excavation of the grave site, with the initial preparatory work being undertaken by UNTAES engineer elements. UNTAES will also provide security and transport support during the excavation.

VI. OBSERVATIONS

43. In a period of less than six months, UNTAES has achieved significant progress in the implementation of its mandate and has contributed to the gradual normalization of relations between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Transitional Administrator and his staff have been working to bring divided populations together through family reunions, village visits, church services and other activities. Families and individuals who had not seen or heard from each other in many years are finally in touch. These results are both satisfying and encouraging. After five years of war and tension, there are signs of a new spirit of cooperation between the parties.

44. The demilitarization of the Region has been completed with relative ease. The parties have displayed a willingness to abide by the Basic Agreement and to recognize the desire of the international community to help them to implement it. Heavy weapons have been either withdrawn or handed over to UNTAES for destruction. Quantities of small arms and ammunition have nevertheless been retained by people who are anxious about their future security. UNTAES will endeavour to build confidence by maintaining stability and security in the Region in the post-demilitarization period. However, the mandate of the military observers who serve with UNTAES in accordance with Security Council resolution 1043 (1996) of 31 January 1996 will expire on 30 July 1996. This post-demilitarization period is a critical time for UNTAES, with the Region

still tense and subject to the possibility of infiltration. The Force Commander feels strongly that a continued presence of United Nations military observers will enhance the ability of UNTAES to monitor the situation, to ensure that demilitarization is and remains complete, to monitor any infractions and to report on other developments relevant to the maintenance of peace and security in the Region. I concur with this view and recommend that the mandate of the military observers be extended to 15 January 1997.

45. In the next phase many challenges await UNTAES. The return of displaced persons is among the most daunting. Several thousand displaced Croats are waiting to go back to their homes in the Region. At the same time, large numbers of Serb displaced persons reside there and are desirous of returning to their place of origin in other parts of Croatia. The work of enabling people to go back to their homes is not going to be easy, not least because of the danger posed by mines and unexploded ordnance, the destruction of housing and infrastructure and the urgent need to rebuild or repair houses before the onset of winter.

46. Another challenge will be to define mechanisms and assurances, acceptable to all and underwritten by the international community, that will protect the cultural and social identities and the heritage of national minorities in a multiethnic society.

47. The financial situation of the Region is precarious. Since the closure of the Djeletovci oilfield on 16 April 1996, the lack of revenue has confronted public services with critical shortages of money and other resources. It will be both extremely demoralizing and threatening to UNTAES if much needed services such as hospitals, public transport and schools have to stop functioning because of the inability to pay salaries and other operating costs.

48. Apart from this immediate need, considerable resources are required for the reconstruction of the Region and the removal of war debris. Demining is an urgent requirement and can help to provide employment for ex-combatants. I appeal to Member States to contribute generously so that UNTAES may increase such activities.

49. Meanwhile, I am happy to be able to report that UNTAES has to date succeeded in carrying out the tasks entrusted to it and that the parties to the Basic Agreement have so far endorsed its activities and given reason to hope that they will continue to cooperate with it in the coming period.